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AUTHOR Geering, Adrian D.
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ABSTRACT

The development of human resource development (HRD) can be considered from two perspectives--the development of HRD as a concept and the development of HRD practitioners. If HRD as a field of study and practice is to develop, then the development of HRD practitioners is of paramount importance. In Australia, HRD is just beginning to come into its own as a field of professional activity. Postsecondary educational institutions, specifically the Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs), have assumed five roles in the development of HRD. CAEs have contributed to the development of HRD practitioners and the field of HRD through; (1) the provision of tertiary courses of study to upgrade professional status of HRD practitioners; (2) the development of research in the HRD field; (3) a change in the role and practice of HRD practitioners; (4) the clarification of the conceptual base of HRD; and (5) promotion of the interchange of staff, ideas, and contributions to the HRD field. (YLB)

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THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

by

DR ADRIAN D GEERING

Course Co-ordinator
Associate Diploma in Training and Development

Underdale Campus
South Australian College of Advanced Education
Holbrooks Road
Underdale, South Australia 5032
AUSTRALIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper will consider the topic, "The role of institutions in the development of Human Resource Development".

In the first section of this paper, the development of Human Resource Development is considered from two perspectives - the development of HRD as a concept and the development of HRD practitioners. The second part of the paper contains a discussion of the role of institutions in the development of HRD. In particular, the contribution of Colleges of Advanced Education in the development of HRD is presented.

2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The concise Oxford Dictionary defines development as "to unfold; to reveal, bring or come from a latent to an active or visible state to make of become fuller, more elaborate or systematic, or bigger; come or bring to maturity". Of these meanings, the notion of bringing to maturity appealed to the writer. What a tremendous amount would have been achieved if HRD would reach maturity in not only a conceptual sense but also in a human and professional sense.

In a recent paper Geering presented a literature review the nature of HRD and the role of the Human Resource Developer.[1] It is quite clear that the HRD as a field of study, is in the pre-paradigmatic field of development. There is a great need for further conceptual development in the field to extend the concept of HRD and relate it to the various systems within modern organizations, the external environment, and values inherent in the definition of Man[2], society and the nature of work.[3] Related to this is the development of HRD practitioners. If HRD as a field of study and practice is to develop, then the development of HRD practitioners must be of paramount importance if this is to occur because learning is at the heart of HRD. If a HRD practitioner has stopped learning, then that may result in arrested development, ineffective functioning and frustrated performance.

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1 Geering A.D. "Human Resource Development", Australian Journal of Adult Education, Vol. 24, No. 1, April 1984, pp. 32-40.

2 The writer uses the term Man to mean the human race and to include both male and female.

3 The writer is currently developing a model of HRD and is doing research in the values area.

A basic question that should be asked at this juncture is how developed are HRD practitioners in Australia? In a recent paper, Spitzer examined trends in this area in the United States and observed, amongst other things, that: training is becoming very professional in the U.S.A.; professional organizations are rapidly growing in this area; academic programs are multiplying and masters and doctoral awards are aimed increasingly at HRD practitioners; few trainers can find jobs with less than a master's degree; the market is getting so competitive that employers can demand doctorates with many years of training experience; and that the emphasis on training is on adult learning methodologies.[4]

In contrast, in Australia, HRD is just beginning to come into its own as a field of professional activity. A number of exciting developments have occurred including: the establishment of a number of tertiary level courses for HRD practitioners; the development and activity of the Australian Institute of Training and Development (AITD); the internationalization of the HRD scene in Australia through visiting overseas HRD consultants sponsored by a variety of bodies including private consulting firms, AITD, Australian Institute of Management, government agencies, tertiary colleges and other training colleges; the Bi-annual National Conference of the AITD; the extensive marketing of overseas HRD materials in Australia; the development and marketing of Australian HRD materials including films; the influence of the National Training Council in many areas; and the development of several journals in this field such as Training and Development in Australia and Tap Your Potential. These developments have all made significant contributions to the HRD field. However, to what extent has this field become a profession in Australia? It is clear from analyzing the development of other occupations involved in providing human services, such as school teaching and nursing, that all have chosen to upgrade entry qualifications and to emphasize academic qualifications and a body of theoretical knowledge to improve their professional status. If, as Walker claimed that the first criterion for a profession is to have a recognized body of complex knowledge then how have HRD practitioners in Australia fared?[5]

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4 Spitzer, D R. "Trends in Training and Development in the United States". Training and Development in Australia, Vol 7, No. 2, 1980, p 19.

5 Walker, W G. "St Augustine was Right". Training and Development in Australia, Vol 8, No 3, September 1981, p 4.

Walker answered this question as follows:

> "In the experience of some of us with masters or doctors degrees in Psychology or Education and a substantial period of apprenticeship, quite well, we believe. For the great majority of us, however, the answer must in all conscience be, 'not well'. Indeed, many of us must accept with good grace the damning description of 'gifted amateurs'".[6]

If this is true, then obviously one of the first development activities that HRD practitioners should undertake would be a tertiary course in HRD at either undergraduate or postgraduate level.

In addition, a number of other activities should be undertaken to ensure continued development including: reading journals and books; viewing films and videos; evaluating and using the computer as an interactive instructional tool; attendance at short courses; job exchanges; observation; study leave; overseas and interstate visits; employing consultants; identifying human resources within the total organization; and increasing the awareness of organizations as learning systems.

If one has a narrow conception of development then not much will occur. When organizations are viewed as learning resources then a whole new approach will emerge. When resources are identified within the organization for learning then it will be discovered that many people with outstanding abilities and skills are being used in the job but not for learning in the organization. Probably one of the new main functions of HRD practitioners as Knowles claimed, "will be to serve as educational brokers...linkers, people who will collect information about who knows what, who's able to do what, and then establishing mechanism, procedures, for linking people who want to know something with people who know it".[7]

In the next section the role of institutions in the development of HRD is considered.

3 THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HRD

In this section of the paper, discussion will be limited to the role of post-secondary educational institutions and in particular the sector in which the writer functions viz. Colleges of Advanced Education (C.A.E.'s). The plethora of private and government bodies involved in HRD, some of which were listed earlier in this paper, will be excluded from this discussion.

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6 Walder, W G. ibid. p 4.

7 Knowles, M. Developing the Training Professional. Training and Development in Australia. Vol 10, No 1, 1983, p 4.

The Commonwealth Government has been the continual catalyst for the growth of the C.A.E.'s through the massive injection of funds when it became responsible for funding of all tertiary education as from January 1974. The Government has also been responsible for the rationalization of existing C.A.E.'s into amalgamated institutions. The founding objectives of the C.A.E.'s, can, in retrospect, be seen to have been twofold:

(a) the marshalling of all available resources to meet the increasing complexity of a growing technology and and increased public demand for tertiary education; and

(b) an attempt to develop new types of tertiary institutions having the stature of the universities, but at the same time having more diversified and heterogenous nature, and a stronger bias towards teaching and the applications of knowledge.

The topic under discussion is related to the role of institutions. Role is defined in the concise Oxford Dictionary as, "one's function, what one is appointed, expected or has undertaken to do." C.A.E.'s have a government mandate to provide vocationally relevant courses. In terms of the development of HRD, C.A.E.'s have contributed in five main ways to the development of HRD practitioners and the field of HRD. These include: the provision of tertiary courses of study to upgrade professional status of HRD practitioners; the development of research in the HRD field; changing the role and practice of HRD practitioners; the clarification of the conceptual base of HRD; and promoted the interchange of staff, ideas and contributions to the HRD field.

3.1 Upgrading of Professional Status

Various commentators such as Arnold [8] and Walker [9] have highlighted the need for HRD practitioners to become more professional. Walker listed four criteria to achieve professional status in Australian society including: the mastery of a disciplined and specialized body of knowledge and skills; the completion of a prescribed pre-service preparation program at a tertiary level; the acceptance of legal sanctions controlling the behaviour of practitioners; and the acceptance of a system of self-policing by practitioners.[10]

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8 Professionalising Training and Development in Training and Develoment in Australia, Vol 10, No 3, September 1983, p 12.

9 Walker W G. The Ralph Report Implications of A.I.T.D. Training and Development in Australia, Vol9, No 4, December 1982, p 10. Walker W G. St. Augustine Was Right. Training and Development in Australia, Vol 8, No 3, September 1981, p 3.

10 Walker ibid, p 10.

Efforts at clear a definition of professionalism have had a long history. The problem of definition arrives from our attempt to give precision to a social or occupational role that varies as a function of the setting within which it is performed, that is itself evolving, and that is perceived differently by different segments of society. Furthermore the concept of the professional cannot be defined by any single criterion.

Different sociologists have given different weights to different criteria, but all have agreed on the necessity to use a multiple criterion definition. The composite list of criteria presented here is derived from an analysis of the writings of a number of sociologists who have studied the professions intensively during the past several decades and are as follows:

1. The professional, as distinct from the amateur, is engaged in a full-time occupation that comprises his principal source of income.

2. The professional is assumed to have a strong motivation or calling as a basis for his choice of a professional career and is assumed to have a stable lifetime commitment to that career.

3. The professional possess a specialized body of knowledge and skills that are acquired during a prolonged period of educaiton and training.

4. The professional makes his decisions on behalf of a client in terms of general principles, theories, or propositions, which he applies to the particular case under consideration.

5. At the same time, the professional is assumed to have a service orientation, which means that he uses his expertise on behalf of the particular needs of his client.

6. The professional's service to the client is assumed to be based on the objective needs of the client and independent of the particular sentiments that the professional may have about the client.

7. The professional is assumed to know better what is good for the client than the client himself. In other words, the professional demands autonomy of judgement of his own performance.

8. Professionals form professional associations which define criteria of admission, educational standards, licensing or other formal entry examinations, career lines within the profession, and areas of jurisdiction for the profession.

9. Professionals have great power and status in the area of their expertise, but their knowledge is assumed to be specific.

10. Professionals make their service available but ordinarily are not allowed to advertise or to seek out clients.

These various criteria fit best the traditional, ancient, or "learned" professions of medicine, law and divinity. They fit in varying degrees occupations like architecture, social work, engineering, teaching, management and HRD. The above criteria (particularly numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8), when applied to any occupational group such as HRD practitioners, may permit judgement to be made in terms of the "degree of professionalization".

A common factor in all of these writings is the possession of a body of knowledge and skills acquired through some period of formal educaion. In this context C.A.E.'s have a very valuable role to play to enable HRD practitioners to upgrade their professional status and thus to upgrade the professions as a whole. In fact many organizations and trainers are committed to a welfare approach to HRD through the provision of weekly study release schemes to enable organizational members to gain additional qualifications to obtain extra pay or to improve professional status and thus career mobility. There are a number of institutions offering some units in HRD in other kinds of awards, but only several offer specific courses for HRD practitioners e.g. South Australian College of Advanced Education (S.A.C.A.E.) and Riverina College of Advanced Education. As Smith stated, after surveying HRD tertiary courses in Australia:

> "It would seem then that the training profession in Australia is not well served by appropriate teritary courses compared to, for example, the U.S.A."[11]

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11 Smith, B. "What's happening about tertiary level Training and Development Courses in Austrlalia". Training and Development in Australia, Vol 6, No 1, March 1979, p 19.

The involvement of close and continuing members of the professional association, the AITD, in the planning and evaluation of these courses through representation on the Planning Committees, Advisory Committees and Accreditation Committees has been an important factor in the development of HRD in Australia. For example in 1983, David Scott, President of AITD, in an editorial, reported on his involvement as a member of the Review Committee for Riverina C.A.E.'s proposed Graduate Diploma in Business Studies (Industrial Relation/Training).[12]

The development of these courses and the involvement of AITD and other professional groups has been laudatory. However, unless there is a continually maintained relationship between C.A.E.'s and the professional organizations, a serious gap can develop between the preparation provided by C.A.E.'s and the needs of the profession . The whole field of continuing professional education indicates the need for maintaining the very close relationship already established between the HRD and academic community in Australia.

3.2 Research in the HRD Field

Many approaches have been used to classify the competencies of HRD practitioner. Kenny [13], White [14], Gurr [15], and others have classified the role of HRD practitioners into a number of competency areas and these are summarized in Table 1. Kenny identified ~~eleven~~ 9 competency areas and related individual competencies in each area to four different kinds of HRD practitioners - instructor, designer, manager and consultant. White listed 105 competencies, in ~~eight~~ 9 competency areas. ASTD [16] has

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12 Scott, D J. "President's Pen". Training and Development in Australia, Vol 10, No 1, March 1983, p 2.

13 Kenny, J B. The Core Competencies of a Trainer. Training and Development in Australia, March 1979, Vol 6, No 1, P 11.

14 White, Tod. Increasing your Effectiveness as a Training and Development Professional. Training and Development Journal, May, 1979, pp 3-12.

15 Gurr, J. "A Study of Training and Development Practitioner Roles". Training and Development in Australia, Sept. 1981, pp 8-10.

16 Olson E and Berne E J. "Academic Preparation of HRD Practitioners", in Training and Development Journal, May 1980, p 80.

TABLE 1: COMPETENCY AREAS OF HRD PRACTITIONER'S ROLE

Kenny [13]	White [14]	Gurr [15]	ASTD [16]
1. Administration	1. Analyzing Needs and Evaluating Results	1. Competency Analysis	1. Analyzing Needs and Evaluating Results
2. Communication	2. Designing And Developing Training Programs and Materials	2. Teaching Methods	2. Designing And Developing Training Programs and Materials
3. Course Design	3. Delivery Training and Development Programs/ Services	3. Instructional Technology	3. Delivery Training and Development Programs/ Services
4. Evaluation	4. Advising and Counselling	4. Training Needs Analysis	4. Advising and Counselling
5. Group Dynamics Process	5. Managing Training Activities	5. Course Design	5. Managing Training Activities
6. Learning Theory	6. Maintaining Organisation Relationship	6. Evaluating Training	6. Maintaining Organisation Relationship
7. Manpower Planning	7. Doing Research to Advance the Training Field	7. Communication	7. Doing Research
8. Person/Organisation Interface	8. Developing Professional Skills and Expertise	8. Group Dynamics	8. Developing Professional Skills and Expertise
9. Teaching Practice	9. Developing Basic Skills and Knowledge	9. Counselling and Interviewing	9. Developing Basic Skills and Knowledge
		10. Special Learning Contract	
		11. HRD Project	
		12. Learning Theory	
		13. Organisational Behaviour	
		14. Psychology of Work	
		15. Sociology of Working Environment	
		16. HRD Concepts	
		17. Recurrent Education-The Teacher	
		18. Recurrent Education-The Student	
		19. Recurrent Education-The Institution	

identified nine categories of professional activity for HRD practitioners. Gurr identified 19 competency areas and a large number of competencies following personal consultation with overseas experts including Professor Malcolm Knowles at Nova Univeristy, Professor Len Nadler at George Washington University and John Kenny at the Department of Education in Ontario, Canada. These areas and competencies formed the basis of a needs analysisquestionnaire which was validated by an advisory committee of highly regarded HRD practitioners in South Australia. The results from the one hundred and seventy-two respondents in the survey were used to develop the Associate Diploma in Training and Development Course at the Underdale Campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education in 1980 [17] (formerly Adelaide College of the Arts and Education). Gurr's research has shown that the roles, activities and competencies of HRD practitioners in Australia follow almost identical development paths with those of similar practitioners in North America. The main value of the research has been to provide a specific tertiary award for HRD practitioners - the Associate Diploma in Training and Development. After four years, over four hundred and fifty students from all states of Australia and several Asian countries, have enrolled in the course. The first person to graduate from the course was presented with his award in April 1983 and a number of other students graduated in early 1984. Obviously, this professional qualification, offered on the basis of part-time, internal or external study, mature age entry, self-paced learning and competency-based educational approach, has received strong support from HRD practitioners. Our students are drawn from a wide range of organizations including the armed forces, public service organizations, private enterprise organization, consulting firms, service organizations, police and correctional service organizations and health organizations.

A further piece of research, related to the development of qualifications for HRD practitioners was conducted by the S.A.C.A.E. to determine what level of support there was in the community for the development of a degree course in human resource management.[18]

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17 For full details of how this award was developed please see Hobart, R B. Development of an Associate Diploma in Training and Development, in Training and Development in Australia, Vol 7, No 1, March 1980, pp 19-22.

18 This piece of research was reported in the following publication. Malone, P. Community Views in the Training of Human Resource Practitioners: some Research Results in Human Resource Management in Australia, Vol 22, No 1, February 1984, pp 50-56.

The major purposes of the survey were to: gauge the level of community approval in relation to curriculum areas of the course; determine whether the course contained an appropriate set of skills; ascertain whether graduates would meet employers' requirements; identify whether the course provided enhanced career prospects; and to decide whether the course was an appropriate award for HRD practitioners.

A questionnaire was designed and sent out to approximately 1,500 respondents from the following groups: all heads of government departments in territorial, state and federal administrations; five hundred chief executive officers of private sector companies in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales; all members of AITD in South Australia and three hundred members of the AITD in Victoria; and all members of the Institute for Personnnel management in South Australia.

The return rate of the questionnaire was 38% - a fairly satisfactory level for this type of investigation. Survey results indicated an outstanding level of acceptance by the respondents of the proposed awards, its aims and content areas. A significant part of the survey dealt with community need for the course. There was a strong support for the course ranging from 92% to 96% of the groups surveyed. Interestingly, few respondents saw the course as being suitable for school leavers. Instead, most respondents saw existing HRD practitioners as being the appropriate students for the course.

Additionally, most respondents thought that the course would enhance the career prospects of students and also they endorsed the practical orientation planned for the course. The degree course, based on this research, is planned for introduction in 1985.

3.3 Changing the Role and Practice of HRD Practitioners

C.A.E.'s, in Australia, are expected to meet community needs by designing vocationally relevant courses. Additionally, C.A.E.'s are expected to provide a leadership role in developing new approaches to areas of human endeavour. In HRD, this leadership, in part, has been provided for by the establishment of new courses the emerging HRD profession, as described in the previous section. However, C.A.E.'s also have a responsibility and role in developing new approaches to HRD, researching answers to HRD questions and promulgating such developments among the HRD community. A related challenge will be to

identify proactively a broadening of role requirements for HRD practitioners and an improvement in skill level as suggested in the literature [19]. Generally, the latter development has occurred as students have participated in HRD courses in C.A.E.'s. In part, the former has begun to emerge as a result of research discussed in the previous section.

The term HRD practitioner covers a variety of roles undertaken by a range of people whose major concern is the management and development of people in the occupation setting including those who work in personnel management and those who work in the training and development function. Obviously as organizations become more complex HRD practitioners will need to have a range of skills which will enable them to function across a spectrum of responsibilities. In prospect, as De Courcy Meade claimed:

> "In these conditions, all previous perceptions of training, training methods and the role of trainers have to be radically changed.....Above all, the Training Function has to become a central rather than a peripheral activity of management. It becomes, in due course, an indispensable rather than an expendable function. It can no longer possibly be carried out, outside the main management activity by relatively low level people called Instructors or even Training Officers. That is not to say that no role will exist for Instructors or Training Officers in a new organic approach to Training. But they will be supporting the mainstream effort not trying to substitute for it."[20]

Obviously the most single accessible and direct resource for human growth and development in any organization are the line supervisors and managers. This has implications for the role of HRD practitioners. One of the major focuses will be to provice managers with educational programs in adult learning principles and skills in performing the role of facilitator of adult learning.[21]

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19 Geering. op cit, page 35.

20 De Courcy Meade. "The Changing Scene of Industrial Training", Training and Development in Australia, Vol 9, No 1, March 1982, p 5.

21 De Courcy Meade. ibid p 4.

The above view is central in the new degree course at the S.A.C.A.E., as Malone stated:

> "What I am in fact suggesting is that the prime function of human resource practitioners is to implement initiatives which result in the maximally effective utilisation of human resources and that this responsibility cannot be properly exercised if practitioners do not have an appropriate range of strategies in their "professional" repertoire."[22]

Obviously, the piece of research conducted to establish the new degree course in human resource management may help to change the role and practice of HRD practitioners in the future.

3.4 Clarification of the Conceptual Base of HRD

In a recent article Macklin asserted that HRD was in the pre-paradigm stage of development because of the existence of conflicting, competing models from a number of schools of thought and lack of a clarification or focus in recognising what the important issues were.[23] He claimed:

> "Perhaps the best definition of ignorance is not a true lack of knowledge but a cursory acknowledgement of core elements of a foundation for HRD."[24]

One of the great benefits from studying a tertiary course in the HRD field is that the essential core elements of HRD will be emphasized during the course of study and enable students to develop a conceptual framework for the study and practice of HRD. These concepts then became the working beliefs on which to base all strategies and tactics for achieving purposes and results in the HRD field. During this process the impact of basic, personal, values and beliefs, on which working beliefs are based, are able also to be clarified. This will result in a defensible, logical conceptual framework in which HRD practice may occur.

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22 Quoted in report on Professionalising Training and Development op cit, pp 14, 15.

23 Macklin T. Remodelling HRD. Training and Development Journal, June 1982, pp 45-52.

24 Ibid, p 47.

3.5 Interchange of Staff, Ideas and Contributions

Probably one of the most exciting contributions C.A.E.'s can make to the development of HRD is related to the interchange of staff, ideas and contributions to professional journals by their staff. The involvement of tertiary staff in such professional associations as the AITD may have enormous benefits for all concerned.

Alternatively, the involvement of HRD practitioners as part-time staff in HRD courses at tertiary institutions helps to expose students to relevant practical experience and real-life situations from on-the-job. As HRD courses expand, the opportunity for well-qualified HRD practitioners to be appointed to positions in tertiary institutions can only enhance the development of HRD in Australia.

6 CONCLUSION

In this paper specific comments were made about the development of HRD in Australia. Additionally, five roles of institutions and specifically C.A.E.'s, in the development of HRD, was discussed.

The future development and professional status of HRD practitioners in Australia cannot be but improved by the role of C.A.E.'s in offering courses and undertaking research. The opportunities are great, the personal cost in terms of time investment is enormous but the results will be significant as a dedicated group of educated HRD practitioners enjoy the rewards of a rich and full professional life.